

FATALITY



AFZF-SAFE

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
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FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5000



07 JUN 06

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Personal Watercraft Collision Costly – Fatality Memo 06-10

1. A III Corps Soldier died as a result of a recent boating accident on a Fort Hood area lake. His Jet Ski Personal Watercraft (PWC) collided with a power boat that was also participating in recreational water activities. The two Soldiers on the PWC were thrown into the water and rescued by nearby boaters; however, one Soldier succumbed to his injuries shortly after the collision.
2. Personal watercraft have become increasingly popular in recent years, accounting for over one-third of the new recreational boat sales, with more than 1 million currently in operation in the United States. The increasingly crowded conditions, combined with the unique performance capabilities of the variety of watercraft on our lakes and waterways, produces a risky situation demanding the operator's full and undivided attention and situational awareness.
3. While all states do not require boat operators to be licensed, vessels are required to have specific safety equipment to include all passengers must have access to Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) and children under the age of 13 must be wearing an approved type of PFD while the watercraft is in operation. Both Soldiers involved in this recent accident were wearing the required equipment and it very likely saved one of their lives.
4. When participating in recreational activities involving boating and PWCs remember **The Four Principles of Safe Boating**: 1. Wearing life jackets save lives; 2. Boater education saves lives; 3. Safe boats save lives; 4. Sober boating saves lives.
5. Composite risk management is the standard for planning and executing every on and off-duty mission or activity. Commanders must ensure that all leaders and Soldiers are trained to standard on the risk management process. The entire 5-step process must be conducted properly. Risk management is the most effective way to combat accidental loss of our Soldiers.

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RAYMOND T. ODIERNO
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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